

REMARKS

Claims 12, 14, 16-21, 23 and 24 are pending in this application. Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that claim 16 is patentable over JP 63-168517.

By this Amendment, claim 16 is rewritten in independent form.

Claim 12 is amended to incorporate the subject matter recited in claims 13 and 15.

Claims 13 and 15 are canceled in view of the amendments to claim 12. Also canceled is claim 22.

Claim 12 is also amended to obviate informalities, as the Examiner suggested. Claims 14 and 17 are amended to change their dependency from claim 13 to claim 12, in view of the cancellation of claim 13. Claim 23 is added to recite the subject matter of original claim 16.

Claim 24 is added to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, page 10, lines 11-14.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank Examiner Parker for the courtesy extended to Applicants' representative, Mr. Luo, during the October 24, 2006 personal interview. The substance of the personal interview is incorporated in the following remarks.

The Office Action objects to claim 12. Claim 12 is amended to obviate informalities, as outlined above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claim 12 is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 12, 13 and 16-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over JP 2002-221032; rejects claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over JP 2002-221032; and rejects claims 14 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 2002-221032 optionally in view of Hawley's (Hawley's Condensed Chemical Dictionary). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed in the June 9, 2006 Amendment, JP 2002-221032 does not qualify as a prior art reference, because it is published on September 8, 2002, which is later than the March 20, 2002 priority date of the present application. An accurate English-language translation of the priority document JP 2002-077821 (filed March 20, 2002) is enclosed to perfect the claim for priority. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), §102(e) and §103(a) over JP 2002-221032 is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 12, 17, 18, 21 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 63-168517; and rejects claims 13-15, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 63-168517. The Office Action recognizes that JP 63-168517 does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 16.¹

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that claim 16 is patentable over JP 63-168517, but respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 12, 14, 15 and 17-22 over JP 63-168517.

Claim 12 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 13 and 15, as outlined above. JP 63-168517 does not disclose or suggest a coating agent that contains a powder dispersed in a sol form in a liquid, as recited in claim 12.

During the personal interview, Examiner Parker indicated that the translation of JP 63-168517 provided by the Patent Office appears to suggest that JP 63-168517 discloses "paint," which could include sol paint. However, the translation provided by the Patent Office is inaccurate. JP 63-168517 does not disclose or suggest "paint." Instead, JP 63-

¹ The Office Action appears to discuss the rejection of claim 16 over JP 63-168517 on page 6, lines 1-3. However, applicants believe that this portion of the Office Action actually refers to claim 21, instead of claim 16. In particular, this portion of the Office Action refers to the materials of a honeycomb structure, which is the subject matter recited in claim 21, not the subject matter recited in claim 16. Thus, applicants understand that the Office Action indicates that JP-63-168517 does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 16, as clearly indicated in the Office Action on page 7, lines 2-5 (item 11).

168517 merely discloses "coating material." Thus, the word "paint" in the translation provided by the Patent Office should be replaced by, for example, "coating material."

An accurate translation of relevant portions of JP 63-168517 is enclosed for the Examiner's review. As shown in this partial translation, JP 63-168517 only discloses "coating material." Thus, JP 63-168517 does not disclose or suggest "paint," and hence does not disclose or suggest "sol." Therefore, JP 63-168517 does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 12, and claims 14, 15 and 17-21 depending therefrom.

Furthermore, JP 63-168517 does not disclose or suggest the particle size recited in claim 12. In particular, the amended claim 12 recite a powder particle size in the range of 10 to 30 nm. This range is critical for promoting permeation of fine particles for easy entry to the pores of the outer wall of a cell structure. See the specification at, for example, page 6, lines 22-page 7, line 10. JP 63-168517 does not disclose or suggest this feature.

JP 63-168517 discloses using a water-repellant coating material at the periphery of printed information. See translation of JP 63-168517 at page 3, lines 10-12 and lines 26-29. As discussed during the personal interview, JP 63-168517 does not recognize the criticality of, and thus does not disclose or suggest, the powder particle size range recited in claim 12. Therefore, JP 63-168517 does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 12, and claims 14, 15 and 17-21 depending therefrom.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 12, 14, 15 and 17-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) over JP 63-168517 is respectfully requested.

Claims 23 and 24 are patentable at least in view of the patentability of claim 12, from which they depend, as well as for additional features they recite. For example, claim 23 recites the subject matter of original claim 16, which is indicated in the Office Action as containing subject matter patentable over JP 63-168517.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

English Translation of JP 2002-077821.
Partial Translation of JP A 63-168517

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